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ABSTRACT

The final report of a Florida Grand Jury investigation of the school dropout situation in Dade County is presented in this document. Information contained in the report was drawn from a questionnaire administered to 264 dropouts and potential dropouts, from a second questionnaire administered to 323 elementary school teachers, and from the testimony of 20 expert witnesses. In Sections I and II, introductory and background material are presented. In Section III, the following topics are discussed: the dropout rate, overall and for Hispanics, Blacks, and nonHispanic Whites; dropout characteristics; and what happens to dropouts after they have left school. In Sections IV through VI, the question of why dropouts leave is addressed in terms of the school, the neighborhood, and the home. The relationship between academic performance and delinquency is explored briefly in Section VII. Following this, schools in Dade County that are successful, the issue of school effectiveness, and some of Dade County's past and present efforts to bring about improvement are examined. A summary of findings and a list of recommendations are presented in the concluding section. (CMG)

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IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
OF FLORIDA IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF DADE

FALL TERM A.D. 1983

FINAL REPORT OF THE GRAND JURY

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JULY 17, 1984

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I N D E X

FINAL REPORT: THE HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUT AND THE INNER CITY SCHOOL

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THE HIGH SCHOOL DROP OUT AND THE INNER CITY SCHOOL

I. INTRODUCTION

We began our journey with one apparently simple question: Why, in our public school system, do many children leave before graduating and what can be done to reduce their numbers?

In the weeks and months since we set out to answer that question we learned that the question was far from simple. We have learned that to find the answer to that question is to find the answer to what is nothing less than one of the most critical problems facing American cities in the 1980s. To address the reasons why children leave school is to address the issue of why children fail. To address the issue of why children fail is to address issues related to alienation and the loss of hope that go far beyond our educational system, issues that involve all of our social institutions and their prospects for the future. As we shall attempt to make clear, the answers we sought are not to be found in the classroom alone.

But the classroom was our focal point. We began our journey last January, studying the classrooms in three large high schools representative of Dade County's ethnic and economic spectrum. We concluded the journey, six months later, sitting in an elementary classroom in the most deprived part of inner city Dade County. It was in that classroom that we grasped firsthand the enormity of the problem we had been addressing and, at the same time, that we found an answer.

The journey was in many respects a sad one because to hear of lost dreams is not a happy process. Yet we end the journey with optimism and hope for the future. We think we saw that hope in the eyes of the children in that classroom at Holmes Elementary.

And if it can happen there, it can happen in classrooms anywhere. But only if we care enough to make it happen everywhere.

II. THE GRAND JURY STUDY AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

We wish to begin our Report by expressing our gratitude to Dr. Leonard Britton and to the Dade County Public Schools. The extent of the cooperation, support and candor exhibited by school administration during the course of our study is without precedent. Much of the material in this Report is not flattering to our educational system. Nevertheless, Dr. Britton and his administrative staff have agreed that this study will be in the best interest of our school system. The beginning of a public dialogue relating to the issues we will raise will ultimately benefit the children now in our schools as well as those who will enter in the years to come.

We note at the outset that we do not have a perfect school system. No community does. The issues raised in this Report are endemic to every urban school system in our nation today. We applaud the Dade County Public School system for not only being willing to study these issues, but for committing personnel and resources to assist us as well. In the course of our study, over two hundred present or former high school students were interviewed as well as over three hundred classroom teachers. Also, two national experts were brought to Miami to study our inner city elementary schools. Not only did the school system facilitate this process in every way possible, it also made available Ms. Marilyn Neff, Director of Basic Skills, and Dr. Robert Stephenson, Director of Educational Accountability, to provide us with whatever information or assistance we required. We are infinitely grateful to Ms. Neff and Dr. Stephenson. They are dedicated public servants and highly qualified educators.

There is no question in our minds that we have in place a very dedicated and extremely qualified school administration. But we have learned that a dedicated and qualified school administration cannot by itself assure a community excellence in the classroom: without adequate budgets and without consistent community commitment, administrative quality means little.

Our study, like all Grand Jury studies, has been limited by time and resources. Yet we feel we have done a great deal of work in the preparation of our Final Report on The High School Drop Out and the Inner City School, including the following:

(1) In conjunction with the University of Miami Department of Sociology, a questionnaire was developed and administered to 264 youths who had either dropped out of school or were still attending high school but exhibiting characteristics generally associated with dropouts;

(2) A questionnaire was developed and completed by 323 elementary school teachers in fifteen selected Dade County elementary schools;

(3) We received testimony from twenty expert witnesses and identified two nationally recognized professionals whose specific expertise dealt with inner city schools, these being Dr. Beverly Caffee Glenn of Harvard University, and Dr Daniel Levine of the University of Missouri-Kansas City;

(4) With the cooperation of the Research Division of the Dade County Planning Department we initiated a study of the relationship between academic performance and socioeconomic status in Dade County's 173 elementary schools. This Report, as well as a detailed analysis of the student interviews and teacher questionnaires will be published subsequent to this Final Report

III. THE EARLY LEAVERS: DROPOUTS OR PUSH OUTS?

A disagreement exists regarding how to describe youths who leave the public school system without having graduated which is more than a semantic debate. The disagreement is symbolic of the lack of consensus as to who they are and how they got there. Once described awkwardly but neutrally as "early leavers," they now are classified as "dropouts." The term implies a conscious intentional decision and the blame is upon he or she who makes the choice to leave. To drop out is to quit. To quit in our society is to give up, to simply lack the motivation to continue or to succeed. Some educators elect to use the term "push out," the blame there being upon the school system for actively contributing to the failure.

In order to take a position on how to describe those who fail to graduate it is obviously necessary to know more about them: (1) How large a group are they and do we have a dropout problem? (2) What are their characteristics? (3) What happens to them after they leave? And the most important question, (4) Why did they leave?

We determined that if we were able to answer those four questions we would then be in a position to answer a fifth, (5) What can we as a community do, assuming we have identified a problem, to address that problem?

In this section of our Report we will address the first three questions. In the following sections we will address questions four and five, as well as explore briefly the relationship between academic performance and delinquency. Finally, we will present our findings and recommendations.

1. How many youths leave school prior to completion?

The surprising answer is that we simply do not know. Equally surprising is the fact that our best estimates range between 15 and 50 percent depending upon who is asked.

The Dade school district, as do most districts, computes the percentage of students who leave school annually and that figure has remained fairly stable at between 15 to 20 percent for the last decade. Yet, once having reached the age of sixteen, a student may leave during any one of the three succeeding years. Studies which have tracked ninth grade classes through to graduation generally find dropout rates of about forty to fifty percent and the experts we have heard have stated that figure would be accurate for Dade County as well.

In all, as many as eight thousand children may drop out of Dade's school system each year. This is clearly a substantial figure. But if in fact the percentage is fairly constant, which it is, do we in fact have a "dropout problem?" In its "Status Report on School Dropout Issues" the school district found that "If the percentage rate, as computed by the Dade County Public Schools, is compared with other comparable systems who use similar data reporting/analyzing procedure, it becomes readily apparent that this system has less of a problem than most. However, if one views the Dade County dropout situation on a longitudinal basis, there are some trends that may suggest cause for concern."

We find great cause for concern. And our concern is not based on numbers. That four of every ten children who enter the ninth grade in Dade County public schools will not stay to graduate is, by itself, cause for grave concern. Yet we find that to place the emphasis upon how many students are leaving, as opposed to upon why they are leaving, is to miss the point. If those who leave are doing so primarily to enter the labor market, or for other positive or rational reasons, the departures would

be less of a concern. In fact most of those who leave are leaving out of frustration and failure at not having learned. This frustration and failure in all too many instances began as early as kindergarten and in all too many instances worsened as the years progressed. The student more often than not left school mentally much sooner than physically. Although leaving school in grades nine or ten, they are leaving with fifth grade reading levels and a legacy of failure which many will carry with them for the remainder of their lives. Lacking marketable skills, their unemployment rates are estimated to run in excess of seventy percent in the inner city. Their delinquency and crime rates will be significantly out of proportion to their numbers.

2. Who are the dropouts?

Existing research consistently indicates that the strongest predictors of the tendency to drop out are academic failure, school and social isolation, as well as a lack of support for academic achievement on the part of parents and peers. In a word, alienation. The same research strongly indicates that dropping out is related to socioeconomic class. Lower class youth are more likely to experience isolation in school and have more exposure to others who have failed in school. Additional research gives strong support for the proposition that frustration and alienation resulting from academic failure is the single most important reason why chilren leave school prior to completion. Besides tending to come from low income families, the dropouts tend to exhibit discipline problems in school, have a high rate of truancy, tend to underachieve academically, do not read at grade level and feel rejected by, and reject, the school.

In much of the Report which follows we will focus upon the Black inner city dropout as the most critical aspect of the dropout problem. We do so based upon the testimony we have heard as well as due to the school test score data presented in

Section V of this Report. We do so also because Florida Department of Education data indicates that the Black dropout rate by far exceeds either the Hispanic or White non-Hispanic rates. We have learned, however, the Dade County school system data and Department of Education data on the numbers of dropouts, as well as on the proportions of dropouts by race and ethnicity, are not at all consistent. The Dade County data suggests that the Hispanic child is now dropping out in proportions in excess of either the Black or White non-Hispanic rates while the State data indicates that Hispanic children are dropping out in proportions somewhere between the White non-Hispanic proportion, which is the lowest, and the Black proportion, which is highest. We have yet to discover which set of data is correct or what the reasons are for the inconsistencies.

By placing our emphasis upon the Black inner city dropout we in no way mean to ignore what has been described to us as the growing problem of the Hispanic dropout. We intend our Report to represent a point of departure for a public dialogue on all aspects of the problem of why children leave school.

In the course of our study we conducted interviews of a total of 264 youths, of which 120 were still in school and 144 had dropped out. The two groups were carefully matched with respect to race, ethnicity and socioeconomic status. The primary reasons the dropout group gave for the principal reason they left school are the following:

Reason	Percent
"Did not like School" ("Hated the work," "Hated getting up," "Failing," etc.)	37%
Expelled or Suspended	13%
"Drugs," "Rebellious," "Arrested"	9%
Wanted to Work	14%

We find significance in the fact that only 14 percent left school out of a desire to work. Other than pregnancy, the remaining reasons for departure clearly relate to frustration, failure and alienation.

In addition, we subdivided the dropouts who gave their reasons for leaving school as the four listed above by race and ethnicity. The percentages were as follows:

Reason	Race/Ethnicity of Respondents		
	White non-Hispanic	Hispanic	Black
Did not like school	58%	55%	50%
Expelled or Suspended	5%	18%	22%
Drugs, Rebelliousness, Arrested	0	0	17%
Wanted to work	37%	27%	11%

White non-Hispanic and Hispanic dropouts, it appears, are more apt to leave school for "positive" reasons than are Black dropouts which lends support to the proposition that alienation is most prevalent in that group of youths.

The influence of peers is clear in the following comparison of the responses of the in-school and dropout groups to the question "How many of your four closest friends have dropped out of school?"

	In-School	Dropouts
All	3%	16%
3 of 4	14%	28%
2 of 4	12%	31%
1 of 4	17%	25%
None	53%	1%

The table indicates that more than half of the in-school respondents had no dropouts among their four closest friends. Three quarters of the dropouts, by contrast, numbered two or more of their four closest friends as dropouts.

We point out that the in-school group that we interviewed were selected from a printout of students who had two or more of five "dropout characteristics" identified by the school system

(low grades, high absenteeism, etc.). We thus selected a group which was, while still in school, similar to the dropout group. We did this so as to attempt to answer the question of why some low-achievers stay in school while others do not.

We find the difference to be subtle and difficult to define. It is perhaps best described as the abandonment of hopes and goals and a loss of identification with social institutions. Expressed by leaving school, the alienation no doubt also will emerge in other ways as well. Alienation is generally not confined to the classroom or to the hours between eight in the morning and three in the afternoon.

Those who stay in, albeit marginally, have a quite different view of their lives, their futures and of school as an integral part of both. Compared below, for example, are the numbers of responses to the question "What kind of job would you like to have?"

	Dropouts (Number)	In-School (Number)
Blue Collar		
Construction	9	7
Mechanic	14	8
Secretarial/Clerical	13	6
Cook/Fastfood	5	0
Electrician	4	0
Other	8	8
	53	29
White Collar		
Computers	9	8
Artist/Painter	3	5
Business Manager	3	8
Accountant	0	2
Other	6	5
	21	28
Professional		
Doctor	0	6
Lawyer	1	3
Engineer	1	4
Architect	1	3
Other	3	5
	6	21

	Dropouts	In-School
Other		
Any Job	9	5
Professional Sports	0	7
Don't Know	6	3
Other	6	6
	21	21

The differences in aspirations is evident. And, once again, we emphasize that the "inschool" group was selected from lists of potential dropouts still in school, and not from high achievers.

The difference is hope versus lack of hope. Compare the answers to the next question: "What do you think are your chances of ever getting that kind of job?"

	Dropouts	In-School
Good-Very Good	53%	75%
Fair	35%	21%
Poor-Very Poor	12%	4%

The responses to a series of general knowledge questions reveals an isolation from the world outside: Two-thirds did not know who the national football champions are, or what war was being fought when Abraham Lincoln was President. Less than half could identify the Governor of Florida or correctly locate Miami on a map of the southeastern United States.

3. What happens to those who leave?

Six out of ten of the dropouts interviewed in our study reported that they were unemployed and not enrolled in any vocational or academic program. Most of those who reported employment also reported they were earning the minimum wage. The Black inner city dropouts reported the highest unemployment rates. The unemployment rates of sixteen to nineteen year old high school dropouts in inner city poverty neighborhoods has been well documented and aptly described as "social dynamite." In the census tract surrounding Holmes Elementary, for example, 80% of those youths aged 16 to 19 who have not completed high school are unemployed or not in the labor force (defined as not having sought employment in the prior thirty days).

And if we are to assume that unemployed dropouts will be absorbed by vocational training or similar programs we are mistaken: only twelve percent of our sample of dropouts reported that they had participated in some form of job training program since dropping out. The table below presents the responses by the dropout group to the question "What did you do after quitting school?"

	Percent
Stayed Home	87%
Got Job Training	12%
Got a Job	1%

The answer to the question "What happens to those who leave?" is a bleak "not much."

IV. WHY DO THEY LEAVE? THE SCHOOL, THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE HOME

At first we looked solely to the school, for failure to finish school clearly is related intimately with failure in the school. But there is more to it than that.

Midway in our journey we felt our focus shift. At the outset, the topics we discussed--the RAISE legislation, the value or role of vocational classes versus academic--related to the classroom. As we shall see shortly, we were surprised to learn that some schools were characterized by a prevalence of failure while others were not. And then we learned that academic failure does not occur late or suddenly. We learned that it occurs early and gradually. Perhaps it occurs in Kindergarten when a child for the first time learns that he or she is not on a par with the others, and that the difference between approval and disapproval, between acceptance and rejection, is the difference between a B and a D.

Perhaps it happens in Kindergarten or perhaps it occurs sooner. Perhaps it happens when a child must live in a home and a neighborhood to which failure and frustration are endemic and must come to school lacking what Charles Silberman described as "the hidden curriculum of the middle class home."

The relationship is a complex one and statistics fail to describe such complexities. Presented below are some excerpts from the testimony we heard during our Term. Suggested is the proposition that although the schools must ultimately bear the responsibility for the academic failure of significant numbers of students, that they do not function in a vacuum.

> I think a kid can drop out of school without dropping out physically; that we lose a lot of kids in their early grades that drop out but still attend...
>
> I also believe that we, within the school system, need to take a closer look at what we do to youngsters, how we turn youngsters off. What I've always asked people to look at, you take a kid, kindergarten, first days of school,

and watch that youngster go to school every day, see the excitement, joy and pleasure on that kid's face when they initially start school... Within two months we've lost over half of those kids. What happens to the excitement they bring? It leads me to think there are some things that we are doing to encourage youngsters to drop out of school... I can't help but believe we don't have the kind of sensitivity that enables us to pinpoint a youngster that comes from a deprived family and living in a home with eight or nine brothers or sisters that he has to get up in the morning and help dress and feed. When this youngster walks into the classroom fifteen or twenty minutes late and has done more work than the average mother, when that youngster walks into the classroom the teacher simply looks at that kid. The look that the teacher has on his or her face is the kind of look that is a punishing look and that youngster begins to experience that punishment at a very early age and eventually that kid drops out... emotionally drops out.

- A District Administrator

More than half of my students are living in single parent homes. I'd say up to eighty-five percent. I may have fifteen percent with two parents. I doubt it. Almost all of (the single parents), about ninety percent of them are on welfare... Parents are dejected, they are in despair. They don't have enough to live on...

- An Elementary School Principal

If someone were to sit down and write down how to run a high school to make sure that as many students as possible got tired and quit, they probably would sit down and design the schools to run just as we now run them... Six periods, 35 or 40 kids in a class, an overwhelmed teacher... The people who teach teachers to be teachers, many of them haven't been in a classroom themselves in thirty years.

- An Educator

Maybe ten percent of students drop out because of learning disabilities... That leaves forty percent that are dropping out that don't have disabilities. Why are they dropping out? What's happening?... Kids are not identifying with the mainstream of students... They lack

social skills for a number of reasons. Maybe they come from families that don't talk to each other much, families that are experiencing a lot of difficulty and they tend to get out on the fringes. They are the kids who, during recess and during break time, kind of drift off to the side... These are potential drop-outs... when your mother and father are at home tearing each other's heads off and experiencing acute marital difficulties, acute drug problems at home, this is going to affect kids tremendously in terms of their performance in school.

- An Educator

We are looking at individuals who lack parental support for the most part. I think when you look at parents who themselves were very low achievers, who have not gone through the educational process and sustained certain levels of education, they are ill equipped to provide that kind of motivation and support that the kids need.

- A Vocational School Administrator

We have got to figure out some way in our schools to not start labeling failures very early. And we have got to help teachers understand that scores on tests may really only indicate a temporary stay in learning and not something that would be forever and ever. It may well be forever and ever but I'm not in a position to be able to say that and I don't ever want to be. I would rather take the more optimistic position that youngsters can learn.

- A Secondary School Principal

Integration has taken minority kids out of their neighborhoods and into large schools where they have lost their identity. It means nothing in terms of school identification and school pride to be at Beach High if you live in Overtown.

- A Psychologist

Collectively the preceding excerpts suggest certain key words which we have heard repeated again and again: alienation... frustration... poverty... single parent family... welfare... pupils labeled as failures... lack of basic skills.

The words are applicable, for the most part, when discussing dropouts in any geographic context from Opa Locka to Homestead or from Coconut Grove to West Kendall. Invariably, however, the focal point of discussions of the dropout problem focuses upon the inner city school, whose academic low-achievement represents one of the most serious crisis we face as a community and as a nation.

We began our journey looking at high school dropouts. We soon began to look at inner city elementary schools and their environments. It is there that the roots of the dropout problems are deeply entrenched. If we are to find solutions, we must do so there. In the next section of our Report we will look at the schools. In the section that follows we will look beyond the schoolyard to the neighborhood and the home.

The statistics which follow in the next section of our Report are at once frightening and tragic. All of Dade County should view them as such.

V. THE SCHOOL: THE CRISIS IN OUR INNER CITY CLASSROOMS

There are twenty-two elementary schools in Dade County with Black student enrollment in excess of ninety percent. There are fourteen elementary schools with White non-Hispanic enrollment in excess of sixty-six percent and thirty-nine elementary schools with Hispanic enrollment in excess of sixty-six percent.

The following table presents the results of the April, 1983 Stanford Achievement Test as administered to Kindergarten children in (1) the 22 elementary schools with Black student population exceeding 90%, (2) the 14 elementary schools with White non-Hispanic enrollment in excess of 66%, and (3) the 39 elementary schools with Hispanic enrollment in excess of 66%. The tests measure sounds and letters (S-L), mathematics (M) and knowledge of the social

environment (E) and the numbers are percentile scores:

	S-L	M	E
Predominantly Black	32	29	22
Predominantly White non-Hispanic	68	52	51
Predominantly Hispanic	52	46	37

The next table presents the results of the April, 1983 Stanford Achievement Test as administered to all the children in the same elementary schools in grades 1 through 6. These tests measure reading comprehension (RC), mathematics computation (MC), mathematics concepts (MO), and mathematics applications (MA). The scores are percentiles:

	RC	MC	MO	MA
Predominantly Black	28	36	30	26
Predominantly White non-Hispanic	63	70	71	72
Predominantly Hispanic	39	56	53	52

The differences in Black test scores as compared to White non-Hispanic and Hispanic scores, in inner city schools, becomes even more pronounced at the junior high school level. The next chart compares Stanford percentile scores of (1) junior high Black students in schools with more than 80% Black enrollment and less than 5% White non-Hispanic, (2) junior highs with more than 50% White non-Hispanic enrollment with less than 15% Black enrollment, and (3) junior highs with 80% or more Hispanic enrollment at less than 10% Black enrollment.

	RC	MC	MO	MA
Predominantly Black	21	29	25	20
Predominantly White non-Hispanic	75	79	77	72
Predominantly Hispanic	49	62	57	51

Once we reach the high school level, we observe the same pattern. The next table compares the Stanford scores (only reading comprehension and mathematics computation percentiles are recorded) of (1) high schools with over 80% Black enrollment and with White non-Hispanic enrollment of less than 10%, (2) high schools with 60% or more White non-Hispanic enrollment and 22% or less Blacks, and (3) high schools with 66% or more Hispanic enrollment and less than 11% Blacks:

	RC.	MC
Predominantly Black	16	22
Predominantly White non-Hispanic	61	70
Predominantly Hispanic	43	58

In summary, not only do Black students in inner city schools fall in percentiles about half the level of scores of the White non-Hispanic and Hispanic students in elementary school, but their scores drop off to about one-third of the combined White non-Hispanic and Hispanic student scores at the high school level. Thus it would appear that Black students in inner city schools begin at a significant disadvantage, and that the disadvantage becomes greater as the student progresses from the elementary school to the junior high school to the high school.

In the following table Dade's schools are ranked using, as the measure of academic achievement, the combined Stanford reading comprehension and mathematics computation percentile scores for each school based on the April, 1983 tests. The scores are again, percentile scores which indicates where a school falls on a scale of 0 to 99 with the national average being 50.

Schools were divided into four categories based on the scores:

Score	Dade Elem. Schools	Dade JHS
65+	23	9
50-64	46	14
36-49	58	10
0-36	45	15

Of schools with scores of less than 36, 35 of the 45 elementary schools (78%), and 13 of the 15 junior high schools (87%) have majority Black enrollment. Fifty-one percent of these elementary schools have in excess of 80% Black enrollment, as do seven of the thirteen Black junior highs. Of these schools none are predominantly White non-Hispanic and six are predominantly Hispanic. Half of the elementary schools in this category (23) have less than 3% White non-Hispanic enrollment and 40 of the 45 have less than 10% White non-Hispanic enrollment.

Likewise, of the 15 junior highs in the bottom category, none are predominantly White non-Hispanic and two are predominantly Hispanic. Only one of the fifteen schools has more than 20% White non-Hispanic enrollment.

At the other end of the spectrum, schools with scores exceeding 65, none of the nine junior highs are predominantly Black, and only four of these schools have more than 10% Black enrollment and none have in excess of 20% Black enrollment.

Likewise in looking at the 23 elementary schools, 20 are White non-Hispanic and two Hispanic. None are predominantly Black and only five have in excess of 25% Black enrollment.

The next table summarizes the results, giving percentages of schools by ethnic predominance for Dade's elementary schools (E) and junior highs (JH).

	White non-Hispanic		Hispanic		Black	
	E	JH	E	JH	E	JH
65+	87%	78%	9%	22%	0	0
50-64	33%	29%	4%	36%	4%	7%
36-49	9%	10%	43%	40%	29%	0
0-36	0	0	13%	14%	78%	87%

It would certainly appear that nothing less than a massive remedial effort is needed to raise academic levels in the schools with Stanford percentile scores below 36. At the elementary and

junior high levels 44060 students attend these sixty schools: 2137 (5%) of these students are White non-Hispanic, 10029 (23%) are Hispanic and 31894 (72%) are Black.

The dropout problem is not specific to any ethnic or racial group or to any economic level. Alienation and frustration know no such distinctions and failure is not experienced by only the poor. Yet failure to finish school is the result of failure in school. And for a multiplicity of reasons failure in school is much more likely to occur in poor neighborhoods. Poor neighborhoods, in Dade County as in most large urban areas, mean Black neighborhoods. By placing our emphasis upon Black inner city schools we in no way imply that test scores would not be equally as low in impoverished White non-Hispanic or Hispanic schools, where they exist. Compared to inner city Black schools, however, they exist sparingly.

The data above suggest that failure begins at, in fact before, the elementary school level. To deal with the dropout problem we must deal with the elementary school level. Indeed we must intervene before the elementary school level. And the place we must do so first and foremost, and with the most resources, is in the Black inner city elementary school.

The crisis we are describing is not a new one. Charles E. Silberman wrote the following in "Crisis in the Classroom" in 1970:

> Our democracy is not destroyed, but it is in danger. Not the least of the reasons is the fact that the community has not wanted for all its children what the best parent wants for his own child...
>
> The failure is not new; it is one of the United States has tolerated for a century or more. The public school never has done much of a job of educating youngsters from the lower class or from immigrant homes.
>
> But students are not likely to develop self-respect if they are unable to master the reading, verbal, and computational skills that the schools are trying to teach. Children must have a sense of

competence if they are to regard themselves as people of worth; the failure that minority-group children, in particular, experience from the beginning can only reinforce the sense of worthlessness that the dominant culture conveys in an almost infinite variety of ways...

What is it in the schools that leads to failure? Professor Robert K. Merton of Columbia University, one of the most distinguished American sociologists, suggested the answer in 1948, in his theory of the "self-fulfilling prophecy." Stated as simply as possible, the theory holds that in many, if not most, situations, people tend to do what is expected of them--so much so, in fact, that even a false expectation may evoke the behavior that makes it seem true...

Thus, a teacher's expectation can and does quite literally affect a student's performance. The teacher who assumes that her students cannot learn is likely to discover that she has a class of children who are indeed unable to learn: yet another teacher, working with the same class but without the same expectation, may discover that she has a class of interested learners. The same obtains with respect to behavior: the teacher who assumes that her students will be disruptive is likely to have a disruptive class on her hands.

And John I. Goodlad wrote as follows in the recently published and extensive "A Place Called School."

There appears to be little to debate in the observation that schools reflect the surrounding social and economic order. Likewise it seems obvious that the home, in spite of its steadily declining influence, advantages or disadvantages the child in enormously significant ways--especially the acquisition of language, attitudes toward others, social and economic values, physical stamina, health habits, and the like. The school with its small percentage of time available, can seek realistically only to modify or shape slightly the areas of home dominance and to be of greater influence in just a few selected areas. Also it can seek, deliberately and consciously, to avoid reinforcing inequities inherent in the role of the home. This last is not easy because teachers themselves reflect their status in the culture. Consequently, if the school is to be anything other than a perpetuator of whatever exists in the society, states and local school districts must set--if they have a

mind to--school policies that to some degree transcend and minimize the role of the classroom as reproducer of the culture.

"If they have a mind to" is a pregnant clause. Many of us are not of a mind to have our schools seek to countermand what is provided and nurtured differentially in homes. For some of us, even the faint prospect of schools seeking to do so is enough to turn us to private schools and the dismantling of the public school system. Equal access to public schools is a tolerable proposition until it leads to busing and the ultimate definition of equal educational opportunity as not just equal access but equal outcomes.

In order to gain some impressions of how teachers perceive their schools and their students, and in order to explore the Silberman and Goodlad hypotheses, questionnaires were distributed to and returned by elementary school teachers who taught in a collection of Dade elementary schools. Seven schools were inner city Black schools, four were predominantly lower socioeconomic class Hispanic and two were suburban White non-Hispanic.

The first series of questions were designed to measure the differences in the expectations teachers had of their students' future potential.

(1) What percentage of the children in your class do you feel will ultimately graduate from high school?

Inner city Black	72%
Lower class Hispanic	76%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	94%

(2) What percentage will ultimately graduate from college?

Inner city Black	31%
Lower class Hispanic	43%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	74%

(3) What percentage will end up in white collar jobs?

Inner city Black	26%
Lower class Hispanic	36%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	64%

(4) On a scale of 1 to 10, what is the overall learning level of your present pupils collectively?

Inner city Black	6.1
Lower class Hispanic	6.2
Suburban White non-Hispanic	8.2

(5) Using the same scale, what is their potential learning level collectively?

Inner city Black	7.0
Lower class Hispanic	6.8
Suburban White non-Hispanic	8.3

(6) In your opinion, how many of your pupils will be arrested later in life for a delinquent act or a crime?

	5% or Less	10-20%	30-40%	50% or Over
Inner city Black	34%	34%	20%	12%
Lower class Hispanic	56%	38%	6%	1%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	81%	19%	0	0

One axiom of education, we have heard, is that high expectations will bring higher achievement and that lower expectations will yield lower achievement. This axiom is generally coupled with the observation that teachers in poor or inner city schools have lower expectations and the result is a self-fulfilling prophecy, as articulated in the quotation from Charles Silberman set forth earlier in this Report.

We certainly see evidence of that phenomenon here although we note that to a great extent the responses are reality-based. Perhaps we are seeing a vicious cycle at work: lower performance leads to lower expectations which leads to lower achievement. In any event it is clear that teachers in inner city schools have lower expectations for their children than do teachers in suburban middle class schools.

The next questions were directed to the teacher's attitude toward the particular school and the pupils:

(7) I like teaching in this school.

	Very Much/A Lot	A Little/Not at All
Inner city Black	80%	20%
Lower class Hispanic	90%	10%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	94%	6%

(8) The other teachers here like teaching in this school.

	Very Much/A Lot	A Little/Not at All
Inner city Black	63%	37%
Lower class Hispanic	81%	19%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	92%	8%

(9) I like my students.

	Very Much/A Lot	A Little/Not at All
Inner city Black	94%	6%
Lower class Hispanic	97%	3%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	97%	3%

(10) The other teachers in my school like their students.

	Very Much/A Lot	A Little/Not at All
Inner city Black	82%	18%
Lower class Hispanic	86%	14%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	93%	7%

(11) The involvement level of the parents of my pupils in their education is

	Very High/High	Average	Low/Very Low
Inner city Black	14%	25%	62%
Lower class Hispanic	21%	38%	42%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	95%	5%	0

The responses here would appear to indicate that although inner city school teachers are considerably less enthusiastic about their environment in the school than suburban teachers, that they do in fact for the most part enjoy their jobs and like their students. This is good news.

The low parent involvement levels in the inner city schools should not come as a surprise given the description of the neighborhood which will follow: it is without doubt difficult to become involved in the school when one is struggling to make ends meet at home.

Taken together the Silberman and Goodlad excerpts, written thirteen years apart, focus upon the difficulties in assigning responsibility for the crisis in our inner city schools. Responsibility lies partly inside the school and partly beyond the school yard. It is unfair to expect the school to reverse handicaps caused by poverty and isolation. But it is even more dangerous to accept academic low-achievement as the inevitable by-product of a household surviving in poverty. We must address the crisis first by acknowledging its existence and secondly by making available as many resources as are needed to reverse these frightening trends.

In the next section of our Report, we will look beyond the schoolyard.

VI. BEYOND THE SCHOOLYARD: THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND THE HOME.

Holmes Elementary is one of the twenty-two inner city elementary schools discussed earlier with ninety percent or better Black enrollment. Located at 1175 N. W. 67 Street, its enrollment of 628 students is one hundred percent Black.

Holmes is located in Census Tract 15.01, which is not unlike approximately a dozen other inner city census tracts. To read census data relating to Tract 15.01 is to read a discouraging tale of social disintegration.

Tract 15.01 measures twenty-five square blocks and is almost entirely residential in nature. Today, 4909 persons live in 15.01. There has been a gradual decrease in its population since 1960, when its population was 6739. In 1970 its residents numbered 5745.

The decline in the population of 15.01 over the past twenty years would seem to imply that many residents have in fact left to live elsewhere.

To study those left behind is not, however, a meaningless excercise. Most have in fact been left behind and what would seem of particular significance is not only their numbers, but also the apparently static, or even worsening, nature of their characteristics, as we shall see below.

Unemployment rates are measured by including only those persons who have actively sought employment in the past thirty days. Thus the definition does not include those over sixteen and not in school, who, for whatever reason, have chosen not to seek work.

Measured by the traditional manner of including only those "in the labor force," 15.01 has a respectable unemployment of 11.4%, as compared to rates of 8% in both 1960 and 1970. However, when one includes those who are no longer seeking work, the rate of those not working soars to 64%, as compared to a rate of 32% in 1960 and 41% in 1970:

	1960		1970		1980	
Employed	1232		904		1187	
Unemployed	114	32%	78	41%	153	64%
Not in Labor Force	477		546		1939	

It should be noted that the demographics of 15.01 appear to have remained fairly constant over the years. Women represented 54% of its population in 1960, 57% in 1970 and 57% in 1980. The percentage of elderly has consistently been quite low (14%), particularly among men: seven out of every ten residents over age 55 are women.

That age data in 15.01 has remained relatively constant means that the dramatic growth of those "not in the labor force" cannot be attributed to, for example, a growth in the elderly population there. The median age in 15.01 is 25 years, compared to the Dade County average of 35 years.

While census data do not break down unemployment by age, some figures suggest that the picture is particularly bleak among those not in school, who have dropped out of school between ages 16 and 19: in 15.01 80% of those youths aged 16 to 19 who have not completed high school are unemployed or not in the labor force. The problem thus appears not to be "unemployment" among high school dropouts, but rather how to motivate those "not in the labor force" to even make an attempt to seek employment.

And if increased educational levels may be expected to provide the solution to this problem, the prognosis is far from good. The percentage of those over 25 who have completed high school in 15.01 is 32% in 1980, compared to 25% in 1970 and 23% in 1960. Thus seven of every ten of 15.01's nearly 5,000 residents, over age 25, has dropped out of school without attaining a high school diploma. Twenty years ago, that figure stood at eight of every ten.

Eighty-two percent of all youths in 15.01 under age 18 are growing up in single parent families. Only 18% are being raised by both parents. The twenty year trend is illustrated clearly by the following tables:

	1960	1970	1980
Children under age 18			
Raised by Single Parent	37%	59%	82%
Raised by Couple	63%	41%	18%

Thirty-seven percent of 15.01's population, or 1816 individuals, were below age 18 in 1980.

And while 57% of all the families in 15.01 have incomes below the federal poverty level, the poverty figure for families with children headed by single women is 75% living at below the poverty level. These figures represent an increase in poverty since 1970 when 44% of the families in 15.01, and 57% of families headed by single women, lived at below the poverty level:

	1970	1980
Below poverty level		
All Families	44%	57%
Single Parent Families	57%	75%

The picture presented by a study of 15.01 is obviously bleak. The prevailing picture is of increasing numbers of unemployed and apparently unmotivated youths who have dropped out of school and whose presence is not even noted in published unemployment rates. Also, the levels of poverty in 15.01 have increased rapidly during the past decade, due in part at least to the increasing numbers of those able to work but "not in the labor force." Slight increases in the levels of educational attainment during the past twenty years have clearly not impacted this phenomenon.

The second striking phenomenon is the disintegration of the traditional family structure, with the single parent family living in poverty having clearly evolved during the past generation as the dominant family form. Sociologists have coined a new phrase during

the past several years; the "feminization of poverty." The phrase is intended to describe the increasing numbers of inner city women raising children alone in poverty. Welfare and food stamps allocations in Florida for a woman raising three children is less than $6500 per year. Census Tract 15.01, and the many areas like it in Dade County, provide showcases for the phenomenon labeled the feminization of poverty.

That is the neighborhood and those are the homes from which Holmes' pupils emerge in the morning and to which they return in the afternoon.

VII. DELINQUENCY AND THE ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

We have written of lost dreams, of the abandonment of hope and of alienation. The dropout, we have learned, drops out not only from the classroom, but from the larger society as well. "What happens to a dream deferred?" asked Langston Hughes; "Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. Or does it explode?"

Often it explodes. The material and data we have seen suggest a direct and causal relationship between failure and alienation experienced in school and crime and delinquency.

As a part of our study we reviewed the school records of 112 delinquent juveniles who were incarcerated in Youth Hall or the Dade County Jail. Their racial-ethnic status was:

	No.	%
Predominantly Black	78	70%
Predominantly Hispanic	21	19%
Predominantly White non-Hispanic	13	11%
	112	100%

In looking at the reading abilities of these children we used what are known as "stanines." Schools classify children by stanine scores with the poorest readers being stanine one, the highest stanine nine and the average stanine five. The stanine scale is as follows, based on national norms:

Stanine	Percentage of Scores
1 (lowest group)	4
2	7
3	12
4	17
5 (middle group)	20
6	17
7	12
8	7
9 (highest group)	4

The scores for the 112 delinquents were as follows:

Race/Ethnicity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Predominantly Black	21	23	19	10	4	1	0	0	0
Predominantly Hispanic	4	3	7	4	0	2	1	0	0
Predominantly White non-Hispanic	0	0	4	1	3	2	2	0	1
	25	26	30	15	7	5	3	0	1

That just under half (46%) of the delinquents read in the bottom 11% of all students, and that 72% score in the bottom 23% says enough about the relationship between academic failure and delinquency. That eight out of every ten Black delinquent children fall in the bottom three stanines brings us back, once again, to our inner city schools.

Most of the group had dropped out (60%).

Which schools do they presently attend, or attended when they dropped out? We use the four categories here that we used on page 17, based on Stanford Achievement Test scores:

Score	No.	%
65+	2	2%
50-64	5	4%
36-49	13	10%
0-36	105	84%
	125	100%

That ninety-one percent of delinquent children come from schools in the lowest third of Dade County's schools says much about the relationship between academic failure and delinquency.

And 55 of the 115 (48%) were enrolled in Dade's four "alternative schools" which, collectively have ninety-five percent Black enrollment and, collectively house less than one percent of Dade's student enrollment.

The alternative schools are the last stop for students who have been identified as discipline problems or truants or both. They should be the focus of our efforts to win back the children we have lost in the lower grades. They should offer alternatives tailored to individual needs and differing abilities.

Yet we have heard them repeatedly described as "dumping grounds."

Black children constitute one third of the students in our public schools. That they constitute 95% of the enrollment of our four "alternative schools" speaks volumes of our having failed to reach these children.

Delinquency and crime and urban violence should not be mysteries to us if we take the time to try to understand.

Now let us move from failure and address success.

VIII. "IF IT CAN HAPPEN THERE, IT CAN HAPPEN EVERYWHERE..."

> It is the successful experiment which is decisive and not the thousand and one failures which preceded it. More is learned from the single success than from the multiple failures. A single success proves it can be done. Thereafter, it is necessary only to learn what made it work.
>
> - Dr. Robert Merton

To this point in our Report we have written of failure. We now would like to speak of success. We have learned that schools can make a difference in all children's lives and that inner city schools can succeed in having an impact upon the failure and alienation that bring about the dropout phenomenon.

But we begin with a warning: we measure success, not unexpectedly, by test score results.

"The test scores have gone up." During our Term we heard that phrase innumerable times. The test scores refer to the State Student Achievement Test Scores (SSAT) which are given in grades 3, 5, 8, 10 and 11.

We must point out that the SSAT scores, the State mandated functional literacy and basic skills attainment standards, are not without their critics: the tests measure only minimum standards and, significantly, different teachers and different schools place differing emphasis on preparation for the SSAT tests. The tests are multiple choice and are of a nature which permits, in fact encourages, preparation. Many feel that preparation for these tests

comes at the sacrifice of the teaching of higher cognitive skills and materials which are so sorely needed in inner city schools. In our teacher questionnaires, for example, teachers were asked to respond to the following question:

> Time spent on preparing for the SSAT (and Stanford) tests could be better spent teaching other things.

	Agree Strongly/ Agree	Don't Know	Disagree/ Disagree Strongly
Inner city Black	42%	14%	43%
Lower class Hispanic	54%	10%	36%
Suburban White non-Hispanic	35%	17%	49%

One teacher who responded crossed out the last two words of the question ("other things") and strongly underlined the word "teaching." There is obviously no consensus on the value of preparation for the SSAT. We can only hope that the "test scores going up" means that real learning is taking place.

But the test scores have gone up at Holmes Elementary, at Charles Drew Elementary and at Liberty City Elementary and at a sprinkling of other inner city schools in Dade County. The principals in these schools, women like Annie Ruth Brown and Willie Mae Brown and men like Fred Morley and Henry Goa are the unsung heroes in Dade County's school system.

Charles Drew Elementary is perhaps the best example. The school, at Seventeenth Avenue and Northwest Sixtieth Street in the heart of Liberty City is ninety-nine percent Black and eighty-four percent of its students qualify for the free lunch program. The Stanford Achievement test scores for Drew's first graders are 58 in reading comprehension and 62 in math computation compared to the County wide scores of 44 and 39. Its third grade SSAT scores are 91, 94 and 96 in reading, writing and math, respectively, again surpassing the County wide scores of 89, 94 and 91. Those observers who advance the hypothesis that inner city children cannot or will not learn need look no further than Charles Drew in order to learn how wrong they are.

There is no air conditioning at Holmes Elementary, and it was hot the day we visited. The corridors and classrooms were quiet and orderly, the children bright eyed and busy at their various tasks. The building was clean and cheerful, classroom walls bore artwork the children had produced. In the cafeteria were large photographs of smiling pupils.

The principal, Annie Ruth Brown, begins each day on the public address system by telling the children that they, Holmes students, are the best and brightest students in Dade County, that they can and will succeed and the children believe her. On this day in late May, close to the end of the school year, she has asked that her students take care to be kind to their teachers. It is late in the year, she tells them, and the teachers are tired. But just as Holmes pupils are the best pupils in the world, so too are Holmes teachers the best teachers in the world. "So be kind to them today," she asks, "they are very tired so be especially kind to them today."

Annie Ruth Brown knows each of her pupils by name. She comes early and she stays late. She is concerned about four fifth graders who she feels she is "losing to the streets." As she guides us down the corridors at Holmes, she stops frequently to talk with the children. Their love and respect for her is evident, as is hers for them.

She spends as much of her time as possible in the classrooms and as little as possible in her office. She insists that her pupils do homework each day. When she began at Holmes two years ago she announced that pupils who had failed to complete their homework would be required to stay after school with her. On the first day one hundred and eight-three pupils were made to stay. On the second day those who stayed numbered twelve.

And, indeed, if it can happen there it can in fact happen anywhere.

As we pointed out at the outset, the problem of underachieving inner city youth is nationwide. It should have come as no surprise to us, then, to learn that national experts continue to study the problem and that the research is extensive. What did come as a surprise, however, is the fact that there is an emerging consensus among the experts that schools can make a difference and that inner city youth are not predestined to academic underachievement.

Upon having determined that the school district welcomed the Grand Jury's efforts and wished to join in the study, we agreed to identify two national experts and to bring them to Miami for two day visits. The two experts, as already indicated, were Professor Daniel Levine of the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and Dr. Beverly Caffee Glenn of the Center for Law and Education at Harvard. Their works over the years had led them to discover inner city urban schools, indeed school districts, in which standardized tests scores were rising each year and in which students were learning.

Their findings, as disclosed in their books and articles, were extremely similar. Dr. Glenn wrote that effective schools have five characteristics in common:

(1) A principal who is the building leader,

(2) An emphasis on basic skills in reading and mathematics,

(3) Systematic testing of student achievement in reading and mathematics,

(4) Teachers with high expectations,

(5) An orderly school climate.

Professor Levine lists the same five characteristics in his writings, albeit in a slightly different order:

(1) Outstanding leadership,

(2) High expectations for students,

(3) Emphasis on basic skills,

(4) Positive, orderly school climate emphasizing student motivation, and

(5) Frequent testing of student progress.

Dr. Levine analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of our school district. In some respects, he concluded, the Dade County school system appears to be in an advantageous position to move toward improvement of achievement at schools in inner city poverty neighborhoods and elsewhere. Among the potentially strong points he identified were the following:

1. The District has devised a carefully-selected set of objectives and materials to serve as a basis for more effective implementation of the reading program.

2. Developments at the three schools in Operation Turnaround, discussed below, have provided useful experience for designing and carrying out reform efforts at inner city schools. In particular, cooperation from the teachers' union was most encouraging.

3. The District maintains a good data base and has excellent capabilities in evaluation and research.

4. Time set aside for faculty development on Wednesday afternoons (1:45-3:05) provides a good beginning for undertaking successful reform efforts.

5. The new Chapter I approach (an extremely significant program which places low achieving students in teacher-student ratios of 1:15) is potentially much more effective than the previous approach or the approaches followed in most other big cities.

6 Nearly all the elementary schools have assistant principals to help the principal in administering an outstanding educational program.

However, the Dade County School District also confronts several problems which appear to be somewhat more severe than similar problems in many other big cities. These appear to include the following:

1. At the elementary level, State-mandated examinations appear to be distorting curriculum and instruction to the detriment of long-range achievement in reading at some or many schools. We have noted this problem earlier in our Report.

2. There may be too many skills--particularly small, mechanical skills taught as the basic curriculum in many classrooms. More stress needs to be placed on comprehension instruction, and less on unproductive oral recitation and other methods that do not result in sustained learning.

3. Contractual agreements sometimes are unduly impeding school improvement efforts. Among the impediments under this heading are overly cumbersome procedures for evaluating marginal teachers, requirements for setting aside instructional time for art and music, and restrictive agreements regarding aspects of instruction to be monitored and audited.

4. There are few if any instructional resources personnel assigned to school buildings on a full-time basis (i.e., one or more per school). This greatly limits the value of time set aside for staff development.

5. Physical facilities--particularly lack of air conditioning--pose a major obstacle in some schools' efforts to improve instructional effectiveness and productivity. Air conditioning is particularly important because of its effect upon the securing and retention of the best teachers. Drew Elementary, for example, is air conditioned and its Principal attributes part of his staff retention to that factor.

The success of district-wide efforts to improve instruction in the future will depend, according to Dr. Levine, among other things, on resourceful utilization of the District strengths and reduction or removal of impediments. Given previous experience in Dade County and other large school districts, efforts to improve achievement at inner city poverty schools should be concentrated, he said, initially at a relatively small group of schools so that district personnel can learn how to undertake and carry out this enormously-difficult task most successfully.

The Dade County school system, to its credit, undertook an attempt to bring about reform in its inner city schools in an experiment that failed to generate the recognition that its implementation deserved. Labeled Operation Turnaround, this endeavor selected three Liberty City schools in high poverty areas with all Black enrollments.

The premise underlying Operation Turnaround was articulated as follows in the program description prepared by the school system:

> The educational problems presented by children from disadvantaged backgrounds must be solved if public education itself is to be saved. For educators, it is a challenge of the first magnitude. The mere concentration of special support to troubled inner city schools is not sufficient. The task at hand as undertaken by Operation Turnaround is to discover effective ways of eliminating systemic and personnel deficiencies as a way of improving the quality of education for disadvantaged children. Most importantly, the ameliorative strategies must be transferable to similarly situated schools.

The project goals were described as:

1. To raise significantly the achievement levels of students at Orchard Villa, Holmes, and Little River Elementary Schools

2. To develop positive staff perceptions at the three schools with respect to the children they teach and the children's potential for growth

3. To build at each school a cohesive, committed, and competent staff which would operate as a team

4. To significantly increase parent involvement at the three schools and to develop an improved sense of community pride in each of these schools

5. To instill in each child at the three schools a love for learning and a belief in self-determination and achievement of goals

A thorough assessment of the teaching staff in the three schools was conducted and a total of forty teachers were voluntarily or involuntarily transferred to other schools. An extensive teacher training program was implemented during the summer of 1980, in anticipation of the commencement of the school year. Lists of needed physical repairs and improvements were prepared and assigned new priorities and the school buildings have since been improved considerably.

Operation Turnaround now appears to have stalled. An evaluation report of its progress was negative and the effort, not yet officially abandoned, is in atrophy. It appears that the reasons for its failure to thrive include the following:

(1) No one individual was given overall responsibility for the total program and responsibility was diffused among several individuals and departments. Operation Turnaround should have one Project Manager with the leadership qualities necessary to make the program succeed. This individual should report not to or through the principals, but to the Director of Basic Skills.

(2) A thorough reassessment of administrators and teachers should be undertaken this summer to assure the retention of only the most dedicated and qualified personnel. The 1980 review recommended no changes in administrators. An assessment may not have taken place. An assessment, or perhaps a reassessment, should probably take place.

(3) The level of interest in Turnaround was at its peak at the start of school but began to wane as soon as those involved assumed other responsibilities and new priorities. Here again the presence of a fulltime Project Manager might have maintained the necessary levels of enthusiasm and commitment.

(4) Too much emphasis may have been placed too quickly on "the test scores going up." Emphasis on "the test scores going up," as we have mentioned, may be detracting from the opportunity to experiment with new or innovative teaching methods. We have learned for example that the most recent education literature suggests strongly that different children learn in different ways: some are auditory learners, some visual and other tactile. Learning how best an individual child learns and adopting teaching methods to suit different needs may in the short run not be reflected in rising Stanford Test scores. In the long run, however, it may have an infinitely more lasting benefit.

(5) It is critical that resource teachers be retained in each Turnaround school. It is equally important that some sort of parent-community liaison persons be placed in each school. Positions such as these will have the objective of bridging the sizeable gap which separates the school from inner city families. Previously funded Chapter I positions for parent liaison persons (PLPs) have apparently been omitted from the budget with lack of demonstrable success being one reason given. The lack of immediate demonstrable success is no rationale for ending an effort that is so critically important. Liaison personnel can also act as outreach to bring into the Turnaround schools representatives of community social service agencies to meet the needs of the pupils and their families. A precedent for this exists in the Edison Early Intervention Program which is operated by the Metro-Dade Community Action Agency.

(6) The Edison Early Intervention Program has in place at Edison Park Elementary another component which should be replicated in each of the Turnaround schools. Every afternoon between the end of normal school and five P.M. a special program is available for students identified by their teachers as underachieving academically or exhibiting behavior difficulties or both. This program, staffed by four teachers provides tutorial and educational programming as well as organized cultural and recreational activities.

A total of sixty children participated during the 1983-84 school year. At present programs are being offered to the families of the participating children as well. This type of approach, involving parents and children, during after-school hours can be made possible by the parent liaisons acting under the leadership of the Program Manager.

The lessons learned from Operation Turnaround are too important to discard. We find in Project Turnaround the model for a new beginning in the heretofore dismal history of Dade County's inner city schools. The progress made there, incomplete as it appears to have been to date, should serve as the cornerstone for a new and expanded initiative and should involve eight to ten inner city schools. In the final section of our Report we present an outline for our new initiative. The outline is based largely upon the recommendations submitted to us by Professor Levine.

We do not wish to simply revive Turnaround. We want to move beyond Turnaround with an expanded program and a new initiative. We also feel this new initiative should receive an annual administrative review, with an evaluation at the conclusion of the second or third year, so as to give the program the necessary time it will need to demonstrate success.

IX. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Findings

(1) We find, first, that we do have a critical dropout problem: four of every ten children who enter the ninth grade in Dade County public schools will not stay to graduate. Looked at in terms of total numbers, as many as eight thousand youths drop out each year.

(2) Minority youths, in particular inner city Black youths, consitute a disproportionately large number of the dropout population. And all too often, dropping out is followed by unemployment and a self perpetuating cycle of alienation and failure.

(3) The reasons why children leave can be traced primarily to the three institutions upon which we rely to bring about assimilation into the larger culture: the school, the neighborhood and the home. Where this assimilation does not take place, the result is alienation and failure which operate in a vicious and widening circle which may never be broken. The cycle begins, for far too many, in kindergarten or even earlier. What is called for is nothing less than greatly increased resources made available at the earliest point in time, specifically in the inner city elementary school.

We must keep in mind the fact that the schools do not function in a vacuum. Unless we take steps to bolster the neighborhood and the home, efforts directed at the school alone will probably not be successful.

(4) We are approaching a crisis in our inner city schools which will be readily apparent to anyone who takes the time to read the test score data presented in our Report. Unless we acknowledge this crisis, and deal with it directly, we will pay a heavy price. The alienation and failure which characterize the school dropout are not dissipated by the act of dropping out. They will remain with us in the form of soaring unemployment and delinquency and crime rates.

(5) The two inseparable and critical problems, the school dropout and the crisis in our inner city schools, are not peculiar to Miami. The problems are being experienced by all large cities. We find that our school administration is both capable and committed to dealing with the issues we raise. The candor and cooperation exhibited by Dr. Britton and his staff during the course of our study are to be highly commended.

(6) And we find, most importantly, that the problem can be addressed successfully. Inner city schools can teach and inner city students can and will achieve. The ultimate definition of equal educational opportunity is not just equal access, but equal outcomes. We must be willing to commit whatever resources may be necessary to achieve that objective.

B. Recommendations

(1) We recommend first the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Dropouts and Inner City Schools to be chaired by the Superintendent or his immediate designee and to include representatives of the school district, of the academic community, the business community, teachers' organizations, and the Chamber of Commerce and civic leadership. This Committee should have a staff person, ideally funded by sources independent of the school district.

The mandate to this Committee should be the preparation by October 1 of a specific plan for the revitalization of inner city schools and for the reduction of the incidence of school dropouts. The plan should specifically address the five characteristics of effective inner city schools enumerated by Dr. Glenn and Dr. Levine.

(2) The Operation Turnaround concept should and must be built upon and expanded to a total of eight to ten low-achieving elementary schools. The most important selection critieria should

be low reading scores on standardized tests in the fourth grade and above. We adopt as our Recommendations the six points regarding the resurrection of Operation Turnaround which were contained in the preceding section of this Report.

(3) The major goal of the new effort should be to improve reading, and secondarily math performance on standardized tests in the fourth grade and above, with little or no weight given to State mastery tests. This does not mean that primary grades should not be included in the effort; instead this guideline follows from the fact that high scores on standardized tests in the primary grades, like the State tests at the elementary level, are not necessarily indicative of school effectiveness.

(4) Lessons learned in Operation Turnaround should be used systematically in designing and carrying out the project. Experience in Operation Turnaround, as well as elsewhere, appears to support the following:

a. Continued close cooperation with the teachers' union.

b. Some transfer of teachers and administrators into and out of the pilot schools based on careful consideration of their potential for productive participation.

c. Continued emphasis on summer staff development and much more emphasis on on-going staff development.

d. Overall direction should be more clearly specified through and monitored by the Executive Director of the Division of Elementary and Secondary Instruction, the Director of Basic Skills, and the Supervisor of Reading.

e. At least one full-time instructional resource person (other than an assistant principal) should be assigned to each school, except in the case of very small schools which might share a resource person.

f. Two persons working under the Director of Basic Skills should be assigned full-time to the project. As implied in this guideline, social studies, science, and other curriculum areas generally should not be made major priorities for the schoolwide improvement at schools participating in the pilot project during the first year. Faculty will have a sufficiently challenging task placing priority emphasis on improvement in reading and language arts.

g. Knowledge gained from effective inner city school projects elsewhere should be fully utilized in planning and implementation. Examples of generalizations supported by experience in such projects include the following: the lowest achievers should be in the smallest classes in reading; instruction must not overemphasize narrow, rote skills; effective instructional schedules which provide sufficient time for improvements in reading and language arts must be carefully worked out at each school.

(5) In order to begin to break the vicious cycle which results in inner city kindergarten children entering school behind and never generally catching up, the State Legislative must be urged to reconsider its prohibition of funding pre-school projects. Programs must be initiated in the inner city which will impact upon three and four year olds. Kindergarten, it is sad to say, is too often too late.

(6) We acknowledge and commend the dropout prevention program which the school system has already put in place. These programs, which include the Chapter II Dropout Prevention Project and the development of a dropout profile designed to identify students with characteristics which would indicate the potential for dropping out are to be commended and it is vitally important that they be given the high priority that they deserve. What should be pointed out, however, is that those programs are designed to deal with students who have already developed symptoms associated with dropping out. Our focus in this Report is, of course, the development of initiatives which address the early causes. The two efforts must be coordinated and must proceed hand-in-hand.

(7) We have recommended the restructuring of an existing program, Operation Turnaround, and the creation of new programs for pre-Kindergarten children and their families. We conclude by urging the continuation and expansion of three programs that are in place and working.

The first is the Dade County Schools' Chapter I program now in place in 106 schools in Dade County and serving 24,000 pupils. The School System is to be highly commended for its creative and effective use of Chapter I funds so as to permit low teacher-student ratios for low-achieving students.

The second is Project Headstart, operated by the Metro-Dade Community Action Agency. We have learned that proposed County budget cuts might necessitate a reduction of staff and a consequent reduction in the numbers of pre-school children served by Headstart. We have pointed out more than once the fact that many children enter Kindergarten with learning deficits that make subsequent failure almost inevitable. Until the State legislature permits the school system to fund programs for pre-schoolers, Headstart is our only such program. To reduce Headstart's funding would be inexcusably shortsighted. We should, instead, be looking for ways to expand it.

Finally, we call attention to the Edison Early Intervention Program, also administered by the Community Action Agency. By offering remedial after-school instruction to selected elementary school students who are low-achievers this program should be replicated in other inner city elementary schools.

(8) We have, during our Term, heard testimony relating to a wide range of issues relating to public education. We have chosen not to address these matters, their importance notwithstanding, so as not to dilute the focus of our Report. However, we feel the need to comment on one such issue: we have heard that many children are not learning due to subtle undiagnosed physical disabilities. We call upon the medical community to assist in establishing diagnostic screening facilities and programs which the public school system does not have adequately available.

(9) We urge that the Grand Jury now sitting, as well as the Fall Term 1984 Grand Jury, carefully monitor progress made toward the implementation of the recommendations we have made.

(10) It is urged that the school system seek special State funding to identify potential dropouts and formulate solutions to the problem.

With those six findings and ten recommendations we end our journey. We hope that our work has not been in vain. We earnestly hope that our Report will be received by those who have the power to effect change as a constructive attempt to bring us closer to the goal of our becoming a community which does want for all its children what the best parent wants for his own child.

Ultimately, therein lies the most hopeful solution to the dropout problem that we will be able to effect.

CAPITAL AND OTHER CRIMINAL CASES PRESENTED TO THE GRAND JURY

Defendant	Charge	Disposition
ROBERT D. ELLIS and ALFRED L. DENNIS, also known as JONH-T	First Degree Murder Armed Robbery Armed Kidnapping Use of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony	True Bill
JIMMY McCALLISTER	Sexual Battery Kidnapping	True Bill
LARRY EUGENE LYNN	First Degree Murder Robbery	True Bill
LEE SMITH, also known as LIONEL SMITH	First Degree Murder Attempted First Degree Murder Unlawful Possession of a Firearm	True Bill
HORACE D. MILLBROOKS	Second Degree Murder Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense	True Bill
WALTER JOHNSON	First Degree Murder	True Bill
WILEY CORNELL ADAMS, JR.	First Degree Murder	True Bill
NESTOR MORAGA and FERNANDO HERRERA	First Degree Murder Kidnapping Kidnapping	True Bill
EDWARD BYRD	First Degree Murder	True Bill
JUAN MODESTO HERNANDEZ	Sexual Battery	True Bill
EFRAIN SOLIVAN	First Degree Murder	True Bill
JOYCE STEWART	First Degree Murder	True Bill
MIGUEL DE JESUS	First Degree Murder Attempted Armed Robbery Possession of a Weapon during the Commission of a Criminal Offense	True Bill
MICHAEL W. DUSKA, also known as DAVID W. ARNOLD, also known as DANIEL P. FRIT, also known as MICHAEL JORDAN	First Degree Murder Burglary Robbery	True Bill

Defendant	Charge	Disposition
PATRICK BRIAN WOODS	First Degree Murder	True Bill
ALAN JEROME PRICE	I. First Degree Murder	
	II. Burglary	
	III. Kidnapping	
	IV. Robbery	
	V. Kidnapping	
	VI. Robbery	
	VII. Kidnapping	
	VIII. Robbery	
	IX. Kidnapping	
	X. Robbery	
	XI. Kidnapping	
	XII. Robbery	
	XIII. Kidnapping	
	XIV. Robbery	
	XV. Grand Theft	
	XVI. Grand Theft	True Bill
TROY SAMUEL SMITH	Kidnapping Sexual Battery Robbery First Degree Murder	True Bill
JOSEPH JEROME RAMIREZ	First Degree Murder Armed Robbery Armed Burglary	True Bill
ROBERT LEE JACKSON	First Degree Murder Robbery	True Bill
RUDOLPH CARL JOHNSON and LIONEL COQUEMARD	First Degree Murder Attempted Armed Robbery Aggravated Assault ("A" Defendant) Possession of a Firearm during the Commission of a Criminal Offense ("A" Defendant)	True Bill
ARMANDO ZUGASTIA	First Degree Murder Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense	True Bill
JESUS SCULL	First Degree Murder First Degree Murder Arson-First Degree Armed Robbery Armed Burglary Possession of a Weapon while Engaged in a Felony	True Bill
ALFRED WILCHER	First Degree Murder Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense Unlawful Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon	True Bill

Defendant	Charge	Disposition
ANGEL TORO, also known as SAMMY TORO, and ANGEL DIAZ, also known as PAPO	First Degree Murder Armed Robbery (5 Counts) Attempted Armed Robbery Armed Kidnapping (6 Counts) Possession of a Firearm during Commission of a Felony	True Bill
JOSE RAMON ENRIQUEZ, also known as JOSE RAMON ENRIQUEZ-RODRIGUEZ	First Degree Murder Armed Robbery Armed Burglary	True Bill
ALFONSO CLARK	Burglary Sexual Battery Sexual Battery Aggravated Assault Aggravated Assault	True Bill
EARLE ALBERT BERNATH	First Degree Murder	True Bill
DAVID STEVEN GOTTFRIED and NELSON LAZARO MOLINA	Armed Burglary First Degree Murder Armed Robbery	True Bill
JUAN HERNANDEZ	Sexual Battery Sexual Battery	True Bill
ALFRED LORENZO KIRKLAND, DIARTIS MILLER, and JAMES HARRISON	First Degree Murder Burglary of an Occupied Structure Attempted Robbery	True Bill
PEDRO ROMERO, also known as GIOVANNI MASCARA, also known as JIMMY	First Degree Murder First Degree Murder	True Bill
JOSEPH KEVIN ROGERS and KEVIN DEWITT SANDS	First Degree Murder Aggravated Battery Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense ("A" Defendant) Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense ("B" Defendant)	True Bill
CALVIN JOSEPH HERRING, also known as CALVIN MULLINS	First Degree Murder Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense	True Bill

Defendant	Charge	Disposition
JOSE RAMON ENRIQUEZ, also known as JOSE RAMON ENRIQUEZ-RODRIGUEZ, and DAVID CABRERIZA	First Degree Murder Armed Robbery Armed Burglary	True Bill
BENNIE HALL	First Degree Murder Attempted Robbery Unlawful Possession of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony	No True Bill
ANDRES GARCIA-MARRERO	First Degree Murder Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense Carrying a Concealed Firearm	True Bill
JORGE FERIL, also known as JORGE FERRA, also known as JORGE FERRAS, also known as "EL MORO"	First Degree Murder	No True Bill
EUGENIO ALVAREZ	First Degree Murder	No True Bill
RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ, also known as "FUNGHI"	First Degree Murder	No True Bill
ORLANDO ADRIAN PORCEQUET	Sexual Battery Kidnapping	True Bill
HENRY LEE LUCAS	I. First Degree Murder II. First Degree Murder III. Kidnapping IV. Sexual Battery V. First Degree Murder VI. Kidnapping VII. Sexual Battery	True Bill
JAVIER VALDERRAMA	I. First Degree Murder II. First Degree Murder III. Robbery IV. Robbery V. Kidnapping VI. Kidnapping VII. Burglary	True Bill
OTIS C. GARRISON, also known as "CUBAN KID"	First Degree Murder Aggravated Battery	True Bill
WILLIE MERCER	First Degree Murder Armed Robbery Armed Robbery	True Bill

Defendant	Charge	Disposition
LENTON JONES, LARRY JAMES BARBER, and TERRANCE ROLLE, also known as WINKY	I. First Degree Murder II. Armed Robbery III. Attempted Armed Robbery IV. Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Criminal Offense V. Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Criminal Offense VI. Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Criminal Offense	True Bill
ROBERT JOHN DOYLE	First Degree Murder First Degree Arson Unlawful Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense	True Bill
FRANCISCO SERRA	First Degree Murder Kidnapping Unlawful Possession of Firearm while Engaged in Criminal Offense	True Bill
GUSTAVO GROSS	First Degree Murder First Degree Murder	True Bill
MICHAEL RENWICK	First Degree Murder Armed Robbery Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense	True Bill
CHARLES SHEPPARD and MICHAEL BRAGGS	First Degree Murder Attempted Armed Robbery	True Bill
EMERY HERSHALL TIMBERLAKE	First Degree Murder Robbery	True Bill
LAMBERT DAVIS	First Degree Murder Unlawful Possession of a Firearm while Engaged in a Criminal Offense	True Bill
GARY CUFF	First Degree Murder Robbery	True Bill
FILIBERTO TORRES	Sexual Battery Lewd and Lascivious Assault Lewd and Lascivious Assault	True Bill
CLARENCE CARR	First Degree Murder	True Bill